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THE LONG HAUL

THE EDITORS

THE "NEW MATH" IN LABOR RELATIONS

HARRY KELBER

MARXISM AND THE NEGRO REVOLT

WILLIAM ASH

Starting the Eighteenth Year

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

We are happy to be able to announce a new and we hope valuable undertaking by MR Press—a series of reprints of "Socialist Classics" which are out of print and hard to obtain. The first two titles in the new series will be *Dollar Diplomacy* by Joseph Freeman and Scott Nearing (first published in 1925) and *Essays on the Materialistic Conception of History* by Antonio Labriola (first published in English in 1903). These titles are about ready to go to the printer, and we will be announcing prepublication and list prices in next month's issue of MR.

The second two titles, we hope, will be *Merrie England* by Robert Blatchford and *News from Nowhere* by William Morris. We say "we hope" because we do not yet have clean copies of these books from which photo-offset reprints can be made. If any reader has such a clean copy and would be willing to let us have it, we would be most grateful. The book of course has to be taken apart to be reproduced, but we will be able to replace it with a copy of the reprint; and in addition we will be glad to throw in any MR Press book as a bonus.

(continued on inside back cover)

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THE LONG HAUL

A friend of ours, presently living abroad, wrote the other day: "It's about time for an MR editorial on the recent turn of political events in various parts of the world—China, Indonesia, Africa, the Tricontinental Conference, Cuba: the 'socialist and anti-colonialist world.' Me, I'm upset and dejected, but then I suppose it's all a necessary part of the long haul."

This suggests a useful framework of analysis: let us see if it is possible to define the long haul of which the events referred to are a part and to fit them together in a meaningful pattern.

Both world wars unleashed powerful, world-wide revolutionary waves. The wave which followed the First World War of course had its high point in the Bolshevik Revolution, but that was by no means the full extent of it. Abortive revolutions took place in Eastern and Central Europe, and there was a marked political shift to the Left in Western Europe as well. Furthermore, largely as a result of the inspiring example of the Russians, revolutionary socialist ideas and movements began for the first time to take root and grow in the underdeveloped and mercilessly exploited colonial and semi-colonial parts of the capitalist-imperialist world. This revolutionary wave, however, despite its elemental force and historic achievements, was relatively short-lived. The suppression of the uprising in Hamburg in October, 1923, put an end to hopes for further advances in Europe; and the bloody counter-revolutionary massacres in China in 1927 did the same in Asia. From then until the outbreak of the Second World War, reaction was in the ascendant and the progressive and revolutionary forces suffered defeat after defeat. It is sufficient to recall in this connection the Japanese invasion of Manchuria (1931), Hitler's rise to power (1933), the Italian conquest of Ethiopia (1934-1936), the Spanish Civil War (1936-1938), and Munich and the rape of Czechoslovakia (1938).

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The revolutionary upsurge which followed the Second World War was wider in scope, more powerful, and of much longer duration. In Europe it began with the final collapse of the old order in most of Eastern and part of Central Europe, and in Asia with the break-up of the established colonial empires. The culminating point was of course the triumph of the Chinese Revolution in 1949. But China was far from being the end; rather it may be said to have initiated a new phase in which historic revolutionary struggles spread for the first time to Africa and Latin America. Once again we need only remind the reader of a few of the highlights: the overthrow of the monarchy in Egypt (1952) and the subsequent expulsion of the British, the final defeat of the French in Vietnam (1954), the Algerian War (1954-1962), the collapse of the colonial system throughout most of Africa beginning with Ghana's achievement of independence in 1957, the victory of the Cuban Revolution (1959) and its subsequent radicalization.

The post-Second World War revolutionary wave was naturally resisted from the beginning by the capitalist-imperialist powers, and particularly by the United States. Some undeniable successes were registered in this counter-revolutionary effort. For example, the Greek guerrillas were suppressed, and so were those of the Philippines and Malaya. Western Europe and Japan were put back on their feet economically and thus innoculated against the revolutionary virus. Both Korea and Vietnam were divided, with the southern half in each case being turned into a United States military foothold on the Asian continent. And, generally, dozens of more or less reactionary regimes with no survival capacity of their own were propped up and maintained in power by economic and/or military "aid" and in not a few cases by naked military intervention. Nevertheless, these all seemed to be aspects of an essentially *defensive* struggle; the scope and momentum of the world-wide revolutionary movement appeared to be such that it must inevitably sweep all before it: it was only a matter of time. As recently as February, 1961, we wrote in this space that one "should beware of the historical analogy with the 1920's when a *de facto* stabilization between the capitalist and socialist worlds actually existed for a number of years," and went on to say:

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Today conditions are completely different, and the meaning of peaceful coexistence has also changed. Whereas in 1924 it meant acceptance by both sides of a temporarily stable division of the world, now it means acceptance by both sides of an inherently changing division—and the changes are all against capitalism and in favor of socialism.

We did not for a moment expect that the United States ruling class, represented at this time by the newly installed Kennedy administration, would accept peaceful coexistence on these terms, confidently predicting that the effort to turn back the clock of history, which had been doggedly pursued by the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, would be continued with no less vigor and probably with greater skill by the Kennedy administration. But we saw no reason to expect that greater success would be achieved in the future than in the past.

Now, five years later, we have to recognize, and indeed to emphasize, that these views were mistaken, that the changes going on in the world were *not* "all against capitalism and in favor of socialism," that the capitalist-imperialist system was and is capable not only of winning occasional tactical victories in retreat but also of mounting a large-scale counter-offensive. That we are now in the midst of such a counter-offensive seems to us to be the fundamental explanation, or at any rate conditioning factor, behind all the events in the socialist and anti-imperialist world to which our correspondent alluded in the statement quoted at the outset of this piece. What is the nature of this counter-offensive and how far will it go? Does it signal a turning point from revolution to counter-revolution, as did the setbacks of the 1920's in the interwar period? Or is it a passing phenomenon, a temporary interruption of the revolutionary tide which began to flow so strongly after the Second World War?

At bottom what is involved is the powerful upsurge of the United States economy which began shortly after Kennedy came to power in January 1961. We have dealt with this phenomenon in these pages and need not include a detailed analysis here.* Suffice it to say that the United States Gross National Product increased from $503.8 billion in 1960 to $676.3 billion in 1965,

* See especially "The Kennedy-Johnson Boom," February, 1965; and "The Boom Continues," February, 1966.

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or by 34.2 percent. But, much more important from a capitalist point of view, in the same period corporate profits increased from $49.7 billion to $74.7 billion, a whopping 50.3 percent. This tremendous, and indeed in many ways quite unprecedented, expansion of the United States economy has been intricately related both as cause and effect to a comparable world-wide out-thrust of United States corporate enterprise and build-up of United States military power. Direct foreign investments of United States corporations grew by about 45 percent from 1960 to 1965.* The increase in the military budget was much less spectacular in these years (11.1 percent from 1960 to 1965), but there is now in the works an expansion of an altogether different order of magnitude and one which, since its coming has been clearly visible for many months, has been having far-reaching advance effects. Congress has already approved an additional $13 billion for the war in Vietnam, which is approximately one third of total military spending in 1965; and on the basis of a detailed study published in its current issue, *Fortune* magazine concludes that the costs of the war are rapidly rising and that many additional billions will be needed in the near future.**

What all this adds up to is a great explosion of United States imperialism after a period of relative stagnation during the two Eisenhower administrations.*** And this explosion, like the detonation of a bomb in an enclosed area, has inevitably generated enormous pressures in all directions. No part of the world has, or could have, escaped the blast effects—not the socialist and anti-imperialist world, not the colonial and semi-colonial countries, not even the advanced capitalist countries of Western Europe and Japan. The history of the recent past can, it seems to us, be most fruitfully interpreted in terms of the

* Final figures not yet being available for 1965, we have arrived at this estimate by adding to the 1964 figure the average yearly expansion of the 1960-1964 period.

** William Bowen, "The Vietnam War: A Cost Accounting," *Fortune*, April, 1966.

*** In this perspective it is perfectly clear that the "new economics" which has been practiced by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and has been so widely hailed as the cure-all for capitalism's ills is *par excellence* the economics of imperialism.

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varied reactions of these different parts of the world, and often of their component parts, to the greatly intensified pressures of United States imperialism. (To avoid misunderstanding, it should perhaps be added that the explosion analogy, while helpful in emphasizing the fact that the pressures in question radiate out in all directions and necessarily affect everyone within range in the entire globe, like all analogies must not be pushed too far. The pressures of an exploding imperialism are not uniform or homogeneous; they cannot be measured in pounds per square inch. On the contrary, they are of the most varied kinds—economic, military, diplomatic, cultural; open, blatant, hidden, subtle; direct, indirect. We assume that all types are in operation, usually in complicated combinations. But we cannot attempt to analyze this aspect of the problem in a brief essay; the most we can hope to do is turn the spotlight on the different kinds of reactions and their possible implications.)

Generally speaking, there are three forms of reaction to pressure: bending, breaking, and resisting. All three have been very much in evidence. The Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe and in the pro-Moscow Communist Parties around the world have been the most prominent benders. The Soviet leaders, unable to cope effectively with the problems of a semi-stagnant economy, and having failed to make a creative Marxian critique of capitalism's postwar expansion (in Western Europe no less than in the United States), have apparently concluded that they have no choice but to accept "peaceful coexistence" with American imperialism so long as it refrains from a direct attack on one of the Warsaw Pact countries. How far this peaceful coexistence will go is still not clear, but it already provides justification for concluding a cultural treaty with the United States while it is raining bombs on a fraternal socialist country.* In any case, Washington already has good reason to be gratified by the Soviet reaction to increased Amer-

* People, both in the Soviet Union and in the United States, who would have been outraged and horrified if Washington had concluded a cultural pact with Nazi Germany in 1940 while the latter was raining bombs on the United States's British ally, seem to think it quite normal that Moscow should make a pact with a United States which is bombing Russia's North Vietnamese ally. The reason for the difference is worth thinking about.

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ican economic and military pressure around the world. In the fashionable idiom of this country's ruling establishment, the Soviet leaders have shown themselves to be "reasonable" men from whom much can be expected.

The "breaks" in the anti-imperialist camp have, as was to be expected, come at certain "weak links in the chain"—the Goulart regime in Brazil, Ben Bella in Algeria, the Sukarno-Communist alliance in Indonesia, Nkrumah in Ghana. We are not implying that these countries had actually succeeded in escaping from the world imperialist system: clearly they had not. But the regimes in question had more or less well developed anti-imperialist tendencies; they were trying to gain a degree of independence of imperialist control or were struggling against certain forms of imperialist pressure; they had friendly dealings with the socialist countries and made alliances with other anti-imperialist forces. For all these reasons they were disliked and distrusted by the imperialist powers which tended to see in them potential half-way houses on the road to fully socialist regimes. And indeed if the balance of world forces had taken a different turn, if the dominant pressures had emanated from the socialist rather than from the imperialist camp, it is conceivable that this half-way house view might have been correct. But in fact it was imperialism which put on the pressure, and none of these regimes was strong enough to withstand it. (Lest this statement be misinterpreted, we hasten to add that we are *not* attributing an important, let alone a decisive, role in their overthrow to the CIA. No doubt the CIA is busy in all such bases, but it can operate effectively only where conditions are ripe and even then it probably does little more than influence the timing of events which would have happened anyway. The real explanation of coups such as have occurred during the past two years in Brazil, Algeria, Indonesia, and Ghana must be sought in the domestic economic and class situation as it is affected by major external economic, political, and military pressures.)

The third form of reaction to the vastly stepped-up pressure of United States imperialism of the last few years is resistance. It has been manifested in every part of the world, not excluding the United States itself. Heading the list of resisters,

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of course, are the people of Vietnam, South and North, to whom the much overworked adjective "heroic" applies in full measure. Standing immediately behind them is People's China, one of the two giants of the socialist world, containing a quarter of the human race, fully anticipating an imperialist attack, and preparing to fight back with all the means at its disposal. Then there are the genuinely revolutionary forces, in and out of the socialist world, which gathered at the recent Tricontinental Conference at Havana and solemnly proclaimed the right and duty of the exploited peoples of the world to meet counter-revolutionary violence with revolutionary violence.* Finally, among the resisters must be included important elements in the advanced sector of the capitalist-imperialist world where the expansion of United States corporate enterprise has been most heavily concentrated in the recent past. The extent to which the developed capitalist countries are being penetrated can be appreciated from the fact that of the total increase in the value of United States direct foreign investments from 1963 to 1964 ($3.6 billion), no less than three quarters ($2.7 billion) occurred in Europe, Canada, and Japan. The bourgeoisies of these countries are increasingly aware that they are now facing outright satellization and colonization, and a struggle is developing between those who accept this fate as desirable or at any rate inevitable and those who are determined to maintain their independence. Gaullist France is the leader of the pro-independence elements, but similar tendencies of varying strength exist in the other countries as well.

To recapitulate: Our argument is that the central dynamic force of the recent past has been an expansionary burst of American imperialism putting tremendous pressure on all parts of the world, and that the history of the period can best be interpreted in terms of the reactions of the various segments and countries to this pressure. The Soviet Union and its allies have bent before the pressure and sought an accommodation with American imperialism. Weak links in the anti-imperialist chain

* Of course not all delegations at the Tricontinental represented revolutionary forces, nor were all the revolutionary forces represented at the conference. The most glaring and least justifiable omission was that of the Guatemalan guerrilla movement known as MR-13.

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have broken: a number of regimes in key underdeveloped countries which were striving for a degree of independence of imperialism have been eliminated. Revolutionary forces, with Vietnam in the lead, have stepped up their resistance and their militance. And parts of the bourgeoisies of the developed capitalist countries, threatened with satellization and colonization, have undertaken a struggle to maintain their independence. Against this background, major events and trends fall into place as component parts of a coherent whole. The Sino-Soviet conflict is fundamentally between benders and resisters. The war in Vietnam is the focal point of resistance. The entrenchment of neocolonialism under increasingly military dominance in the underdeveloped parts of the capitalist-imperialist world flows naturally from burgeoning American power. The crisis in NATO is the surface reflection of France's struggle for national independence. All these things must be seen as closely interrelated features of one great unified international landscape.

If we now shift our angle of vision and try to look ahead, what do we see?

First, it seems pretty clear that there is not going to be any letup in the near future of the outward thrust of United States imperialism. A domestic depression is the only thing which could produce such a letup, but a depression seems highly unlikely unless there is a *prior* and very substantial reduction in the military budget and in public and private expenditures abroad. Realistically, what seems to be ahead for the domestic economy is not depression but inflation and increasing application of wartime controls. The question therefore is not *whether* the outward expansion is going to continue but what forms it will take. And here we must make certain assumptions: (1) Vietnam will continue to be the focal point of resistance, and the war there will go on escalating as it has been doing since early 1965. (2) The United States will continue its efforts to consolidate and extend its control over the underdeveloped countries of the capitalist-imperialist world. And (3) American corporations will continue, and perhaps even step up, their drive to penetrate and ultimately to dominate the economies of the advanced capitalist countries.

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If these assumptions are correct, it seems to us that certain conclusions follow with inescapable logic.

First, there is quite literally no visible limit to the costs in dollars and manpower of the escalating war in Southeast Asia. *Fortune,* in the article cited above, notes that Washington is reported to be planning a buildup to 400,000 troops by the end of the year and adds: "With that many U.S. servicemen in South Vietnam, the cost of the war would run to $21 billion a year—even more if bombing and tactical air support increased in proportion to the buildup on the ground." What this implies is so fantastic as to be beyond imagination. The Chinese, in an editorial reprinted in the *New York Times* of April 7th, indicate that they are preparing for either a small scale or a large scale war with the United States. "A large scale war," they say, "means one in which the United States will use all their strength, sending a few million or even 10 million troops to China." If *Fortune's* dollars/men ratio is applied to 10 million, it appears that such a war would cost no less than $525 billion a year, which is nearly 80 percent of the 1965 Gross National Product! And such an incredible outpouring of wealth would by no means guarantee any sort of victory, as the war in Vietnam already proves. (The GNP of all Vietnam, incidentally, probably does not exceed $3 billion.)

Second, the effort to consolidate and extend United States control over the underdeveloped countries seems certain to involve heavier and heavier costs. In this connection it is enough to note that the Johnson administration is moving toward an underwriting of India's food requirements which, as is well known, stem less from any overall shortage of grain than from hoarding and speculation and a distribution system incapable of transferring supplies from surplus to deficit areas. Without a thoroughgoing social revolution the Indian economy is certain to go from bad to worse: a commitment to support it is a commitment to throw endless billions into a bottomless pit. And the same can be said of Indonesia and many of the other countries Washington is apparently so anxious to assume responsibility for. These mounting costs, added to the costs of escalating the war in Southeast Asia, can hardly help having a profoundly adverse effect on the United States balance of pay-

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ments, already badly overstrained by the heavy foreign commitments assumed in the past.

Third, the continued outward expansion of corporate enterprise in both the developed and the underdeveloped parts of the "free world" will hasten the deterioration of the balance-of-payments situation. While it is true that on balance United States corporations take in from abroad more than they send out, and that a large part of their foreign assets comes from reinvesting the profits of their foreign subsidiaries or borrowing abroad, nevertheless whatever capital outflow does take place constitutes a drain on the balance of payments.

What all this adds up to is that the outward expansion of United States imperialism is getting completely out of hand. The escalating military commitment in Southeast Asia threatens to swallow up the country's available manpower, leaving very little to back up a whole world-wide network of commitments, ostensibly undertaken to protect scores of countries against communist aggression but actually to protect their reactionary governments against their own people. And the costs of that war, added to all the other foreign obligations which have been or soon will be assumed, are obviously going to exceed by far any conceivable total of payments by foreigners to the United States. Only one conclusion is possible: great crises are in the making, crises of unprecedented scope and magnitude.

It is not our present purpose to attempt to analyze the form which these crises may take or what their outcome may be. That will obviously be a continuing responsibility of MONTHLY REVIEW in the months and years ahead. Here we will only say that great crises for United States imperialism mean great opportunities for its victims and enemies. So we reply to our correspondent whose statement we quoted at the beginning of this editorial: Cheer up! Now is not the time to be upset and dejected. Now is the time to get to work; to open second, third, fourth, and many more fronts against imperialism; to make all possible preparations—ideological, organizational, military—to take full advantage of the great opportunities for victorious struggle which surely lie ahead.

(April 10, 1966)

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NOW IT CAN BE TOLD: "NEW MATH" IN LABOR RELATIONS

BY HARRY KELBER

In New York's 12-day transit strike early this year, newspaper, TV, and radio coverage focused on the hardships endured by millions of New Yorkers and the generally patient and ingenious good humor with which they adjusted to the crisis. These were the victims, without doubt. The late Michael J. Quill, Transport Workers Union president, served as roguish villain, at least until the collapse that hospitalized him; and behind him stood the thousands of strikers who were castigated by everyone from the man in the street to the President of the United States.

Post-settlement comments consolidated the popularly held view of the transit worker as a thick-skinned extortionist prepared to paralyze the city indefinitely, make a fare increase inevitable, and even endanger the economic stability of the nation with his unreasonable demands.

Judge Irving H. Saypol, who held up the transit workers' pay raises temporarily on the basis of the Condon-Wadlin act, said: "No personal reasons on their part can justify the ransom extorted from 8,000,000 citizens of a government by 30,000 employees, four-tenths of one percentum of the population."

President Johnson, describing himself as "quite disturbed," attacked the settlement as "a serious violation of the wage policy of the federal government designed to protect the whole nation from destructive inflation."

Yet, when one peers more closely into the details of the transit negotiations and final settlement, it becomes apparent that the subway and bus workers were victims, too, trapped by

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the "new math" in labor negotiations. This is a post-Second World War development that has made it increasingly difficult to find out who has won what. The formula for multiplying a fairly modest raise into a seemingly outrageous one was expertly demonstrated during the recent strike, with representatives of the Transit Authority, other public officials, the press, and even the union contributing to the general murkiness.

Even months after the settlement, although many New Yorkers remained convinced that the transit workers had engaged in highway robbery, no one had any accurate idea of the dollars-and-cents increase they had actually gained. The transit workers themselves, who read in the papers that they had won $60 million, had no clear notion of what they would actually find in their pay envelopes.

When the increases finally came through in late March, the amounts on the pay checks were certainly a letdown. According to figures provided to this writer by the Transit Authority, the actual net increases for the strikers averaged from $2.74 to $3.41 a week for the first year of the pact.

The discrepancy between public impression and actual fact is traceable to a collective bargaining technique which is now routinely used by industrial relations executives, and by union leaders when it suits their purposes. A few basic rules are essential to the "new math" approach:

(1) *Exploit the multiplier factors*: In estimating a union's demands, an employer should multiply a hypothetical wage increase by the number of workers on his payroll, by 52 weeks in the year, and by the number of years the proposed contract is to run. Thus, a $1 a week wage increase may be beneath the union's contempt (and 2½ cents an hour absolutely unspeakable), but can labor negotiators afford to sneer at an impressive $3,619,200 which an employer may offer? That million dollar proposal represents the same $1 a week increase, calculated over a two-year period, for 34,800 workers (the number involved, for example, in the transit negotiations).

(2) *Compound the package with additives*: Put a price tag on *every* union demand, not merely wages, and make a maximum estimate of the cost of each item. Thus, if the union includes a demand that workers receive pay for a few days'

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absence because of jury duty or a death in the family, an employer can estimate the cost of these "fringes" at full value. In fact, only a small percentage of his workers may lose time for these reasons and only rarely does an employer find it necessary to hire a substitute for the absentee.

The same procedure can adroitly be applied to union proposals regarding wash-up time, changes in shift or starting time, workers' grievances, or death "gamble" benefits, a ghoulish item which appeared in the transit settlement. When all these contract changes are added to the proposed wage bill, they can add mythical millions.

(3) *Avoid giving a breakdown of cost estimates*: This is of prime importance. It enables the employer to nurture the impression that not only is the union asking for an exorbitant amount, but that most of the cost will be distributed in wage increases.

The TWU, at the outset of its negotiations with the New York City Transit Authority, presented a list of 76 demands covering a wide range of labor problems, including shop grievances. The TA estimated the cost at a staggering $680 million. No breakdown was offered of the cost items or the portion that would be required for wage increases. Obligingly, the press, radio, and TV reporters asked for none, accepting the TA's estimate as a responsible statement. Throughout the strike, reporters displayed an unprofessional lack of curiosity about the economic issues that had sent the transit workers to the picket lines.

(4) *Convert the maximum demand into the appearance of a minimum demand*: It is customary for a union to inflate its proposals in preliminary negotiations. This is part of the warm-up ritual in collective bargaining. The employer traditionally counters the union's opening gambit by offering an equally absurd bid and, in some cases, asking for wage reductions. Indeed, no one would be more astonished than the union members themselves if their original demands were ever granted.

Under the new technique, employer negotiators pretend the union is deadly serious about its first proposals. They repeat their own estimate of the cost of the union's proposals at every opportunity, building up the public belief that the union's initial

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maximum demands are what the labor negotiators actually expect and are willing to strike for. When successfully applied, this rule not only alienates the public from the union but tends to neutralize active support from workers in other industries.

The tactic worked beautifully in the transit situation. The TA, having conjured up a figure of $680 million, let this amount, with all its implications of greed, sink into the public mind. Day after day, the newspapers repeated the more extravagant of the union's demands, especially its initial proposals for a 30 percent wage increase, a four-day, 32-hour week, and six weeks of vacation after one year.

Most New Yorkers were understandably cool to the prospect of suffering the massive inconvenience of a subway and bus tie-up because the transit workers appeared to be "asking for the moon." In the absence of *any* counter-offer from the TA—and this was not made until a few hours before the strike deadline—the TWU refrained from reducing its demands for fear this would be construed as weakness.

Just how effectively the "new math" was operating in collective bargaining could be seen in an editorial which appeared in *The New York Times* on January 6, halfway through the strike:

> At the time the union struck it had on the table demands for $680 million in increases over a two-year period, a sum twenty times as large as it settled for two years ago. This would have provided an *increase* of $7,800 a year or $150 a week for the average transit worker. On the strike's second day the union put on the retro rockets sufficiently to come down to a mere $180 million. This translates out to $2,000 a year *more* for each worker, or almost $40 a week. If the price has come down since, the public has not been told about it.

If trusting *Times* readers became incensed at the gall of transit workers striking for a $150 a week pay increase—more than the salaries of most New Yorkers—their displeasure is quite understandable. Even a $40 a week wage increase would be more than enough to excite the envy and hostility of most workers.

The union leadership, for its own reasons, joined in from time to time in using the "new math," preferring to speak in terms of millions rather than cents an hour. After negotiations

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for its 1964-1965 contract had ended, the union jubilantly hailed "a $42 million wage package" victory, claiming that it made New York's hourly-rated bus and subway employees "the highest paid transit workers in the world." Two years later, TWU Secretary-Treasurer Matthew Guinan went into negotiations complaining that "transit workers in New York are grossly underpaid by any intelligent comparison." The TWU did not attach any overall figure to its 1966 contract demands but, by its own account, on the second day of the strike it reduced its demands to $120 million (not the $180 million claimed by the *Times*.) When agreement was finally reached, TWU Local 100 President Daniel Gilmartin exulted over what he called the union's greatest collective bargaining victory—"a $60 million package of wages and other benefits unsurpassed anywhere in the United States."

The task of computing the dollar value of just the wage increase per worker seemed to become possible when it was announced that wages would be raised 4 percent from January 1, 1966, another 4 percent on January 1, 1967, and 7 percent more in July 1, 1967. This averages out to a $1,036.88 gross increase for the two years, or slightly more than $36 million for the 34,800 workers.* Actually, no changes were made in vacation time or hours (they stayed at 40) for most of the workers; one additional paid holiday, a modest pension increase, and other minor changes were won. Whether these fringe benefits add up to another $24 million is anybody's guess.

Even after having been informed of his percentage increase, the individual transit worker could still not be sure of what he would find in his pay envelope when he received the first installment of his raise. Before the era of pay-as-you-go taxes, when a union negotiated a $5 pay increase, the five dollar bill was automatically added to take-home pay. But with federal and state withholding taxes, instituted in 1944, no wage earner ever sees his full gross pay. Before he gets his wages, federal and state income taxes take their cut.

Thus, it was not until March 18, when the TA handed out the first paychecks under the new settlement, that the TWU

* Computed on the basis of adding percentage increases to the average hourly rate of $3.13 in the old contract.

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members were able to find out how much additional spending money they had actually won for the first year.

The figures illustrate the gap between promise and delivery in the national wage picture. A motorman, entitled to the maximum rate in his classification, was presumably getting a $5.48 per week pay boost. But assuming he was a married man with two dependents, his take-home pay after taxes, social security deductions, pension payment and union dues went from $108.07 to $111.32, a total of $3.25 a week.

A top-rated train conductor's pay rose $2.74 a week, to $98.85, and a bus driver's spending income was up to $103.99 a week, a rise of $3.07. In the highest paid category, a maintainer earning $3.59 an hour, take-home pay rose to $115.40, an increase of $3.41. There were a considerable number of transit workers in other classifications; those who had not attained the top rating had pay increases lower than those cited.

The transit worker's "inflationary" increase has already been at least partly cancelled out by price increases that have occurred on most items in the past year, and he may also have a city income tax to look forward to as well as higher federal taxes. Furthermore, it will take well over a year of the new pay increases to make up for the more than $200 in take-home pay he lost during the 12-day strike.

What about those staggered 4 percent and 7 percent pay increases due to come in January and June, 1967? Theoretically, they mean the transit worker will "get" an average overall gross raise of $516.88 for the second year. But, of course, only a fraction of this will appear in his take-home pay. In a time of rising prices and taxes, it is impossible to forecast how much additional spending money the transit worker will have two years from now.

Anyone familiar with living costs in New York City can hardly take seriously the notion that a few extra bucks in the pockets of a family scraping along on roughly $100 a week is going to lead to an uncontrolled spending spree. Yet this was what Gardner Ackley, chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, was suggesting when he attacked the transit agreement as "a serious violation of the wage policy of the federal government designed to protect the whole nation from

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destructive inflation." President Johnson used the same phraseology when he voiced his displeasure with the settlement.

Another basic rule in the "new math" in labor negotiations has been use of the government guideline of a 3.2 percent maximum allowable wage increase (based on increased productivity) and calculated on mythical gross pay rather than the worker's real spending money.

In his Economic Report sent to Congress on January 27 this year, President Johnson noted, with evident approval, this record of earnings by different sectors of the population in 1965:

—average hourly earnings up 3 per cent in manufacturing, 4½ per cent in retail trade;
—average weekly earnings up 3½ per cent in manufacturing, 3⅓ per cent in trade.

Other forms of income rose, too:

—farm proprietors' average income up 22 per cent;
—average income of owners of unincorporated businesses and professional workers up 7½ per cent;
—total dividends paid up 12 per cent.

And corporations prospered, with:

—profits before taxes up 15 per cent;
—profits after taxes up 20 per cent;
—corporate retained earnings up 29 per cent.

The President did not explain why he viewed soaring corporate profits as a sign of progress, while at the same time he expected working men and women to be contented with a 3.2 percent increase based on gross pay and fringe costs.

Even such a staunch defender of the President's wage-price guideposts as Senator William Proxmire (D., Wisc.) conceded that labor is being "shortchanged." In a major Senate speech March 14 in which he admiringly traced the evolution of the guidelines policy, Proxmire concluded: "All this is not to say that these guideposts have been perfect. Indeed, there is strong evidence that they will be particularly unfair to labor as applied in the coming year." He pointed out that the guideposts assume that "prices in the coming year will be stable," but the administration "is virtually certain they will not be."

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Although leaders of the steel, auto, and other major unions have accommodated themselves to the wage-price guidelines in contract settlements for the past several years, the inherent inequities of that policy have become so flagrant that the AFL-CIO at its March executive council meeting in Bal Harbour announced a drive for sizable wage increases that would overshoot the 3.2 percent ceiling.

As the experience of the TWU members would suggest, however, even this will be meaningless unless labor stops speaking of grandiose million-dollar packages and starts saying out loud that what really counts is what shows up in the pay envelope.

Meanwhile, the transit workers—who have been told by their union, by the mass media, and by the President of the United States that they gained super-sized pay increases—might well ask how come it took a strike that laid low the Great Society's greatest city for 12 days to win the weekly price of *less* than a carton of cigarettes.

When whole races and peoples conspire to propagate gigantic mute lies in the interest of tyrannies and shams, why should we care anything about the trifling lies told by individuals?

—Mark Twain

Most people would die sooner than think; in fact, they do so.

—Bertrand Russell

If you have any wrongs to be redressed, if you cherish your most worthy hope of raising your whole order peacefully and solidly, if you thirst for leisure and knowledge, if you long to lessen those inequalities which have been our stumbling-block since the beginning of the world, then cast aside sloth and cry out against an UNJUST WAR. . .

—William Morris
Manifesto to the Working Men of England
1877

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MARXISM AND THE NEGRO REVOLT

BY WILLIAM ASH

In the October, 1965, issue of MONTHLY REVIEW the editorial article, "Decolonization at Home," provided a very clear analysis of the brief Los Angeles rising and its brutal suppression by police and National Guard. This was no isolated occurrence in the development of the struggle of the Afro-American people from a demand for constitutional rights to a challenge to the existing social order.

Some of those who have commented sympathetically over the last year or so on this struggle seem to believe that it calls into question the whole Marxist conception of social change through class conflict. Both the Negro revolt in the United States and national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are seen as lying outside the scope of a Marxist analysis of the forces capable of revolutionizing society.

In the September, 1963, issue of MONTHLY REVIEW there were several articles setting forth such a point of view. Marc Schleifer, on the basis of finding the Afro-American masses the *only* potentially revolutionary sector in American life today, put the matter thus: "Are we then capable—for reasons of our Marxist understanding—of asking the restless black masses to be 'moderate,' to slow down, to *wait* until a sizable segment of white America reaches an equivalent revolutionary potential?"[1]*

In practically identifying the Negro revolt in the United States with the national liberation struggles of colonial peoples, Keith Buchanan finds "a striking parallel between the impotence of the European Left confronted with the revolutionary up-

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* Footnotes are at the end of the article.

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heavals of the Third World and the incapacity of the American Left to confront effectively the Negro problem in the United States."[2]

He quotes approvingly Harold W. Cruse who has argued that the "class struggle" is no longer a reality between capitalists and proletarians within the Western and affluent nations, but has become supra-national—in the last resort, a struggle between the "have" and "have-not" peoples, with the Afro-Americans falling into the latter category as a national minority if not actually a nation.[3]

A similar point is made by James Boggs who insists that the Negro struggle cannot be considered as an aspect of class confrontation between capitalists and proletariat because it has been joined by "hardly a single white worker. The only whites who have joined the struggle are those who are economically most secure—college students, professionals, intellectuals—individuals who represent no significant social force."[4]

And Keith Buchanan, basing his arguments on the same facts, writes in the article already quoted: "We must concern ourselves with the cogency of Marxist theories regarding the role of the urban proletariat as an agency of revolutionary change." Since experience in China, Cuba, and Algeria teaches us that "the peasantry is the most decisive force for change in an underdeveloped society," he suggests that the Negro struggle can be fitted into this general pattern by equating the American South with underdeveloped countries and Black Nationalism with peasant revolts.

The Urban Proletariat and the Negro Revolt

While there have undoubtedly been cadres among white workers in the United States who have fought for the fullest economic and social equality among black and white, it must be accepted that the *bulk* of white workers have shown themselves indifferent or even hostile to the demands of the Negro people. The only authorities on the question whether the Negro people have any substantial allies among the white American working class are the Negro people themselves. If they feel isolated in their struggle, that very feeling amounts to an indictment of working-class organizations in the United States.

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Much the same criticism can be made of the attitude towards national liberation struggles. It is not the organized white workers of the United States who have demonstrated against the brutal acts of American imperialism in Vietnam but, again, students, intellectuals, and professional people in individual acts of protest. Recently the head of the International Longshoremen's Association with four other senior officials went to Saigon at the union's expense to speed up the turnaround of ships delivering arms and ammunition to be used against the Vietnamese people!

A similar situation exists in Western Europe. Instead of industrial action on the home front coordinated with blows being struck at the imperialist class enemy in colonial territories, there have all too often been such declarations as that of the leaders of the French miners in 1962, that they had held off their strike until the Algerian war was over so as not to embarrass the government. In Britain the imperialist acts of a Labour government in Malaya, Aden, and elsewhere, and the complete support of the United States government's policy in Vietnam have aroused no real mass opposition in the trade union movement.

It is on the basis of facts like these that Keith Buchanan concludes that the political movements in underdeveloped countries and the revolt of the Afro-American people "seem to be inverting the classical left-wing theory by which social revolution in the advanced countries would make it possible to lift the burden of oppression in the dependent territories."

Marxism and National Liberation

But is this "classical left-wing theory," which lays down a rigid pattern for the order of revolutionary struggle as spreading outwards from the centers of capitalist concentration, really Marxism? As early as 1913 Lenin was saying that "a new source of great world storms has opened up in Asia. . . . It is in this era of storms and their repercussions on Europe that we are now living."[5]

Stalin was arguing in 1925 that "the colonial countries constitute the principal rear of imperialism. The revolutionization of this rear is bound to undermine imperialism not only in

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the sense that imperialism will be deprived of its rear, but also in the sense that the revolutionization of the East is bound to give a powerful impulse to the intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the West."[6]

And more recently, on June 14, 1963, a statement of the Chinese Communist Party says: "The anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle of the people of Asia, Africa, and Latin America is definitely not merely a matter of regional significance but is one of overall importance for the whole cause of proletarian world revolution."[7] And in another statement issued in 1964 the Chinese Marxists give the very sequence for revolutionary movements which has led certain commentators to question the adequacy of Marxist theory. "Today the national liberation revolutions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are the most important forces dealing imperialism direct blows. . . . With the development of the contradiction and the struggle in Western Europe and America, the momentous day of battle will arrive in the homes of capitalism and the heartlands of imperialism."[8]

The same Marxist understanding of revolutionary potential is to be found in Mao Tse-tung's call in August, 1963, for the widest possible support of the Afro-American people. "The speedy development of the struggle of the American Negroes is a manifestation of the sharpening of class struggle and national struggle within the United States." The statement deduces the similarity of national liberation struggles and the Negro revolt not from some characteristic of being peasants in an underdeveloped area but from resistance against a common oppressor. "The fascist atrocities committed by the United States imperialists against the Negro people have laid bare the true nature of the so-called democracy and freedom in the United States and revealed the inner link between the reactionary policies pursued by the United States government at home and its policies of aggression abroad." This is precisely the point made by SNCC in a statement reported in the *New York Times* (International Edition) of January 8, 1966: "We believe the United States government has been deceptive in its claim of concern for the freedom of the Vietnamese people, just as the government has been deceptive in claiming concern for the freedom of the colored people."

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Marxism and the Role of the Urban Proletariat

Marxism does not, then, fail to take full account of the importance for the world revolutionary movement of national liberation struggles and the revolts of oppressed people anywhere, including that of the Afro-Americans. Even the present failure of the organized working class in Western Europe and the United States to ratify through industrial action the principle of proletarian internationalism can only be understood in Marxist terms.

What, from a Marxist point of view, *are* the essential characteristics of a revolutionary class? Implicitly they are contained within the classic slogan of communism: "Workers of the world unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains." The agents of revolution apostrophized in this slogan are a propertyless proletariat stripped of everything but its labor power, with the political consciousness to unite with the oppressed anywhere in the world against the class enemy. At the time Marx was developing his conception of scientific socialism, the urban proletariat in the first industrialized countries seemed most obviously to possess these essential characteristics of a revolutionary class. Deprived of everything but their capacity to work and herded into factories and mines which gave them a sense of class solidarity, they developed from within their ranks a militant leadership.

Those who interpreted Marx mechanically attributed a revolutionary role to this proletariat by virtue of its being urban and located in an industrially advanced country, rather than seeing these circumstances as significant only insofar as they were associated with intensity of exploitation and militancy of class consciousness. This misinterpretation, by which contributing factors at a particular historical period were mistaken for the very conditions of a revolutionary impetus, has led to such erroneous conclusions as that a revolution was unlikely to occur outside the main capitalist centers and that, even if it did, it could not be self-sustaining or that, where no substantial urban proletariat existed, revolution would have to wait for an indigenous capitalism to create one locally.

In appreciating the essential characteristics of the revolutionary impulse as degree of exploitation and level of class

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consciousness, Marxism distinguishes between the proletariat as a class-*for*-itself with an active political sense of its mission to transform society and the proletariat as merely a class-*in*-itself which may be temporarily passive. Marxism accounts for the present negative role of the metropolitan proletariat of Western Europe and the United States in terms of the objective changes in material conditions which have for the time being diverted it from a revolutionary perspective. For one thing, Britain and the United States, the very countries which in Marx's day were considered to have so little in the way of a military bureaucratic apparatus that they offered the best opportunities for a relatively peaceful transition to socialism, are now armed camps organized primarily for the purpose of defending imperialism against challenges at home or abroad. Living in the very shadow of such a military bureaucracy, the urban proletariat has acquired an attitude of defeatism which expresses itself in various forms of class collaboration.

But more important, the superprofits of imperialist exploitation have made it possible for the ruling class to make economic concessions to large sections of the urban proletariat. To the extent that workers have been able to obtain certain of the material benefits of imperialism they have tended to share in a bourgeois ideology, ceasing to think in terms of revolutionary transformation and only envisaging gradual changes by which their share of these material benefits might be further increased.

This situation, however, must not be seen as static. Buying off one section of the international proletariat by increased exploitation of some other section is not a game that the capitalist ruling class can continue to play indefinitely once the geographic expansion of imperialism has been checked and its frontiers are even being rolled back. Furthermore, a genuine leadership of any section of the proletariat does not simply wait for a revolutionary situation to develop. In training cadres to be ready for such a situation it contributes to a raising of the level of class consciousness generally and thus actually helps in creating revolutionary conditions.

Revisionism and the Urban Proletariat

Unfortunately some Communist Parties, instead of leading

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the working class of the more industrially advanced countries along the correct line of proletarian internationalism, have trailed along with the parochial attitudes of the bulk of urban workers. They too have succumbed to defeatism in respect to the possibility of revolution—simply because they have so narrowed their perspective as to be unable to recognize revolutionary movements actually in being among the overseas proletariat. They have seen the class struggle almost exclusively in terms of metropolitan proletariat against capitalist ruling class, with the overseas proletariat eventually benefiting from a socialist victory at home. It is this mechanical distortion of Marxism which has lent substance to criticisms supposedly directed at Marxism itself. These so-called Marxists have failed, often quite deliberately, to expose the connection between the better living standards of the urban proletariat and the intensified exploitation of the colonial people, and they have argued that further concessions might be wrung from the ruling class by forms of agitation which that very class permitted. They have thus substituted a gradualist, legalistic approach for class war and have even concluded that socialism itself might come about peacefully and "legalistically" through such an approach.

Similar attitudes have too often prevailed in respect to the struggle of the Negro people. Since they would undoubtedly benefit from the establishment of socialism, it is suggested that Negroes must support the white proletariat against capitalism rather than expect white workers to join them in their fight for racial equality and justice.

In both cases what is being proposed is that the most exploited sections of the proletariat, the workers and peasants in colonial and semi-colonial territories or the Afro-Americans in the United States, must bide their time till others, with a "better" understanding of social change, shall be able to do something for them. This is not only at best paternalism and at worst national or racial chauvinism; it is also a profoundly un-Marxist refusal to recognize and unite with those who have the greatest revolutionary potential. Colonialism and racism are not to be regarded as evils which will simply disappear with the advent of socialism: they must be seen as arousing the

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forces of opposition which largely constitute the very means by which capitalism will be overthrown.

Lenin is very specific about the manner in which such failures in revolutionary understanding come about. Concentrating too exclusively on the struggle for better conditions of workers in the metropolitan countries has resulted in economism which is a vulgarization of Marxism. "However much we may try to lend the economic struggle itself a political character, we shall never be able to develop the political consciousness of the workers by confining ourselves to the economic struggle, for the limits of this task are too narrow. . . . Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only outside of the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The only sphere from which it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between *all* the various classes and strata and the state and the government. . . . The ideal should not be a trade union secretary, but a tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects."[9]

No party calling itself Marxist can afford to neglect the study of the relationships of all the various classes throughout the entire economic system, which in the case of imperialist countries extends far beyond national boundaries. Nor can it ignore any manifestation of oppression anywhere in that system. It is only from such a comprehensive grasp of the total situation that proletarian class *political* consciousness arises. Any party that dissociates itself from the most exploited section of the proletariat is overlooking the most significant polarization of class forces in a particular situation and is trying to maintain, in respect to that major social contradiction, some middle position. In dissociating itself from what is potentially the most revolutionary section of the proletariat, it is in fact dissociating itself from revolution.

The kind of social analysis required of Marxists is clearly indicated in Mao's reflections on the principal contradiction.[10] In any complex situation many contradictions exist and it is necessary to distinguish the principal contradiction from those

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which are subordinate. It is this dialectical analysis of a whole complex of class contradictions in order to find the real levers of social change in any particular situation which has too often been neglected by those calling themselves Marxists.

If the critics of such "Marxists" are correct in opposing the mechanical view that an urban proletariat is automatically the main agent of revolution, they are guilty of the same sort of mistake themselves when they assume that only the peasantry in underdeveloped countries has any real revolutionary potential and that, therefore, the Negro people, insofar as their struggle is revolutionary, must be considered as predominantly peasants in a relatively underdeveloped area.

National Liberation and the Negro Revolt

There *are* similarities between the Negro struggle and national liberation movements which can be accounted for in terms of a comparable degree of exploitation by the same class enemy and a comparable level of political consciousness enabling them to recognize each other as allies in class struggle. As this political consciousness has developed among the Negro people so has grown their sense of solidarity with those struggling for national independence in Africa, in Latin America and, most recently, in Vietnam itself.

But if there are similarities there are distinctions too—both in degree and in kind. Racism has to a greater or lesser extent characterized all colonial exploitation, but it is *the* essential factor in the exploitation of the Afro-American people. National liberation struggles, insofar as they successfully challenge political and economic domination, render the racist attitudes of colonialists irrelevant. But in the United States, where racism is a built-in feature of the internal economy, any struggle for better material conditions by the most exploited section of the community is bound to take the form of a direct challenge to racial discrimination in all its aspects.

Racism is associated with the degree of compulsion in recruiting and continuing to exploit a labor force. The closer this compulsion approaches to virtual enslavement, the more racist the attitudes generated on the part of those who benefit from the exploitation. Such brutal compulsion is not normally

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employed for any length of time against members of the same race or nation but is usually connected with some form of physical conquest.

If capitalism had ever assumed the pure laissez-faire form ascribed to it by classical bourgeois economists, the polarization of society would have taken the simple form of an industrial proletariat on the one hand and a capitalist ruling class on the other. In fact, both in the early stage of the accumulation of capital and throughout subsequent developments, a grosser form of exploitation based on aggressive colonialist expansion has existed along with proletarian *wage* slavery. It is this grosser form of exploitation which has given rise to racist ideas.

The existence of these two distinguishable, if not ultimately separable, forms of exploitation has led to the situation described earlier—a situation in which it is possible to distinguish the narrowly conceived class opposition of the urban proletariat in metropolitan countries from the national liberation struggles of the overseas workers and peasants. It is this distinction which the imperialist ruling class tries in every way possible to turn into a permanent division.

Within the United States a continuation of the distinction between the narrow economic struggle of white workers against employers and the broad fight of the Negro people for racial justice serves the interest of their common class enemy. Furthermore, while the former struggle in its present form may include the Negro people and their aspirations, the struggle of the Negro people is a challenge to American society as a whole and can thus embrace all progressive elements.

But the major difference between national liberation struggles and the Negro revolt is the absence in the latter case of a homeland to liberate. It is useless for Negro leaders, however admirably militant in the fight against discrimination, or for the most devoted sympathizers with their cause to gloss over this fact. National liberation movements do have a quality of externality in relation to the imperialist heartlands which inevitably determines the character of the struggle. The Negro revolt, on the other hand, must be seen as the crux of the class struggle *within* the United States. "The struggle of the American Negroes for freedom and emancipation is part of the gen-

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eral struggle of the entire American working people for liberation. As Negroes bear the brunt of oppression they are therefore the vanguard in this general struggle."[11] Only when this point has been grasped by all concerned can the strategy of the fight against racism and the class struggle implicit in that fight be correctly conceived.

Marxism and the Negro Revolt

Insofar as the Negro struggle is militant, and makes demands which cannot be met within the existing social order, it is revolutionary. No Marxists can wish to see this struggle limited to a campaign for integration since that would rob the struggle of its revolutionary potential and limit it to a reformist movement for adjustments within the existing system.

That the aims of any particular form of Negro protest may not be expressed in terms Marxists would use, far from being an excuse for them to dissociate themselves, serves to emphasize the necessity for their fullest and most active involvement. What is absolutely impermissible and self-defeating is criticism from the side lines of this or that aspect of the Negro struggle.

No Marxists can ever dissociate themselves from any genuine movement against imperialism, whatever its ideological content at a given moment. These movements will be influenced by Marxist ideas to the extent that Marxists themselves are in the forefront of the struggle. By the same token, no Marxists can stand aloof from *any* section of the proletariat engaged in struggle with the class enemy at home.

At the same time the only certain hope for the broadest possible front to go forward from the embattled positions already taken up by the Negro people is the development among black and white workers alike of a genuine Marxist leadership. It is as vital that the Negro struggle should produce from its ranks leaders with a Marxist understanding of the dialectics of social change as that national liberation movements, to consolidate their victories against imperialism, should be led by Marxist parties. Without such leadership the most heroic battles for national independence may only serve to replace colonial status with neo-colonialism. Without such leadership the Negro struggle could be led astray by either adventurism or reformism,

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with equally frustrating results. Marxism is the social perspective which the leaders of any revolutionary struggle must have if the movement is not to fizzle out or be led into some blind alley.

Notes

1. "A Socialist Plea for Black Nationalism," MONTHLY REVIEW, September 1963.
2. "The Negro Problem in the U.S.—An Outsider's View," MONTHLY REVIEW, September 1963.
3. "Revolutionary Nationalism and the Afro-American," *Studies on the Left,* Vol. 2, No. 3.
4. "The Meaning of Black Revolt in the U.S.A.," *Revolution,* Vol. I, No. 9, 1964.
5. *Selected Works,* New York, International Publishers, 1943, Vol. 11, p. 51.
6. *Works,* Moscow, Vol. 7, pp. 235-36, 1954.
7. "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement," Peking, 1963.
8. "Apologists for Neo-Colonialism," Joint Editorial of *People's Daily* and *Red Flag,* Peking, 1964.
9. "What is To Be Done" (1902), *Selected Works,* Moscow, Vol. I, pp. 200-202.
10. "On Contradictions," *Selected Works,* Bombay, People's Publishing House, Vol. II, 1954.
11. *People's Daily,* Peking, July 16, 1964.

We are not, as we like to claim in Fourth of July speeches, the most truly revolutionary nation on earth; we are, on the contrary, much closer to being the most unrevolutionary nation on earth.

—Senator J. W. Fulbright,
September 16, 1965

I say that our New World democracy, however great a success in uplifting the masses out of their sloughs, in materialistic development, products, and in a certain highly deceptive superficial popular intellectuality, is, so far, an almost complete failure in its social aspects, and in really grand religious, moral, literary, and aesthetic results. In vain do we march with unprecedented strides to empire so colossal, outvying the antique, beyond Alexander's, beyond the proudest sway of Rome. In vain have we annex'd Texas, California, Alaska, and reach north for Canada and south for Cuba. It is as if we were somehow being endow'd with a vast and more and more thoroughly-appointed body, and then left with little or no soul.

—Walt Whitman in *Democratic Vistas*

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TRADING WITH CHINA

BY M. A. JEFFERS

M. A. Jeffers is a British businessman who visits China twice every year. He writes: "Britain has been trading with China without interruption for more than 150 years but dealing with China today is very different from the pre-1949 times when compradors, middlemen, and graft were indispensable to business. It is a vastly different experience not only from the old days but from trading anywhere else in the world." The article below describes that experience.—*The Editors*

In April and October each year, businessmen from sixty different countries as far apart as Japan and Mexico converge on Canton to attend the Spring and Autumn Trade Fairs.

Most travel via Hong Kong where they indulge their personal shopping fancies, buying bottles of a favorite Scotch or a particular brand of tobacco to take with them into China.

An hour out of Kowloon brings the train to the border town of Shumshun where British-leased territory is separated from China by a short strip of no man's land. Changing trains, passport and custom formalities add an hour or so to the journey. The British promised some ten years ago to initiate talks for a straight, non-stop run between Kowloon and Canton —but they so far remain uninitiated.

To trade with China is a new experience from the moment you enter the country. The quiet organization that allots your hotel room, selects and delivers your luggage, is part of a service that considers all guests important and tipping offensive.

The difference is again expressed with the welcoming banquet given the night before the opening of the Fair. Canton prides itself on its cuisine, especially on its variety. None of us questioned this as we put our forks into one or more of the five different prawn dishes, the roast duck in walnuts, chicken in almonds, bamboo shoots and mushrooms. There is a saying in

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Canton: Never ask for the recipe; they use everything except the chair you are sitting on.

At the banquet, old regulars greet each other in a dozen languages with English still the favorite. The Japanese contingent is the largest, but always there are large groups from Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, West Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, and dozens of other countries. The Chinese hosts walk around greeting each one of the many hundreds of guests, pressing them to take more of the exotic foods and drinks ranging from explosive Mao Tai, stronger than Vodka, to mildly inoffensive Tsingtao beer.

The hospitality is much appreciated, but businessmen want above everything to get down to the trading. During the night, cables from European offices arrive with bids and offers to be negotiated at the Fair. Next morning at breakfast, as they eat their porridge, eggs and bacon, or whatever, you can tell from their faces whether the cables have been encouraging or not.

In the new big Fair building each floor is allotted to a group of similar commodities, making contact agreeably simple; the Chinese negotiators are besieged by hundreds of eager traders. International names like Krupps and Mannesman from Germany wait near the Mitzui group from Japan, or Richard Thomas and Baldwin from Britain, along with other manufacturers and merchants.

The steel boys are bent on selling plates, sheets, special steels, and tubes; machinery manufacturers vie with each other with offers of sophisticated and advanced products; merchants bid for a cargo (5,000 tons) of soybeans, rice, a tank of wood oil, furs, skins, hides, tea of 70 different types, canned goods, fresh foods, eggs (frozen, pasteurized, or in powder form). The catalogue of different items fills eight pages of a colored brochure.

Like most other countries, China exports goods similar to her imports. Britain, for example, imports and exports certain machines, instruments, textiles, and so on; so do the United States, France, and West Germany. China, with her growing industry, has now so widened her variety of industrial goods that her exports in building materials, to mention only one item, take

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first place in some adjacent markets. Traditional agricultural items are still the major part of her export trade, but now China is also an exporter of a large variety of machines, instruments, and chemicals. Unlike other countries in the socialist bloc, she does not favor barter. She prefers to buy where she wants and to pay by irrevocable letter of credit in any convertible currency except United States dollars. She sells on the same terms and aims to have a balanced trade. As a matter of fact, with her importance as a supplier to several countries, there is at present an annual trading balance in her favor.

When the time comes to meet the Chinese negotiator one cannot begin with immediate business talk—that would be considered impolite. The opening gambit is a string of personal questions: When did you arrive? Which hotel are you staying at? Are you comfortable? Can we do anything for you? Only after such an exchange can the hard bargaining begin.

The Chinese make a profound study of commodities and market conditions. They receive daily market reports from all centers in the world, and it is soon recognized that they are not only well informed but shrewd judges of market tendencies.

All the talking will be done through an interpreter, even when the negotiator's English (or other language) is quite good. More often than not, there is an understudy interpreter, this being part of the plan to train more people in every branch of the country's economy. Similarly, a negotiator will seldom be alone; he too will have an understudy. Decisions are never made "off the cuff" but are always the result of a discussion among several people. Once given, their word is as good as their bond, be it a deal for $5 million or $1,000. The experience of an Australian wool company will perhaps illustrate this. The firm's representative had made an offer of some wool and was told to return next day for a decision. Meanwhile the market fell six points. He kept his appointment expecting to have to renegotiate, but no, the Chinese said they would take up the offer despite the fall because they had already indicated their tacit acceptance. This should not lead one to believe they are soft negotiators; on the contrary, they are without doubt the toughest and most exacting in the world.

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When the People's Republic of China was established in October, 1949, steps were taken by the Western alliance to harass her in trade by introducing a list of embargoed goods. This had its ironic side, because in the list of forbidden exports were minerals and metals which she had in surplus and was in fact offering for sale. Britain traded with her as far as possible but more or less maintained the embargo. As often happens, the cleverly designed scheme brought results different from those intended. To give one example: in the early 1950's, one of the Chinese trading corporations, in reply to an offer from a British chemical merchant, presented an enquiry for about $5 million worth of penicillin. The embargo limited exportation to $1 million in any one year to any country within the socialist camp. The Chinese bought the limited amount but warned the British merchant that the day would come when they would refuse to buy penicillin from the West and might indeed export some. Less than two years later, China's factories were producing sufficient penicillin to enable her to export limited quantities and to give a polite refusal to British requests to "Please buy my penicillin." Today the embargo list still exists. It still contains items that China has neither the need nor the desire to purchase. Let anyone ask any of the thousands of manufacurers who trade with her, whether she has ever appeared anxious or in desperate need of anything from the West, including advanced techniques. The invariable answer will be that the seller has to make the going from start to finish. It is tough going all along the line, with the Chinese taking time for a thorough examination of every facet of a proposition. Many American businessmen have tried to trade with her, embargo or not. Some have tried through friendly European companies, others by direct approach like the group that went as far as Shumshun, the border town, hoping the Chinese would come over and talk. The result was a dignified indifference, for China holds trade as just one part of a general relationship, and there will have to be major changes in American policy before her industrialists can get a part of this market, which is almost a world on its own. Not once have Chinese traders approached Americans for trade. From all this it seems reason-

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able to accept that her long-range development is planned independently of Western countries.

Merchants and manufacturers are aware of the gigantic potential of this market; like the iceberg, the obvious part is only a small portion of the whole.

At the last Autumn Fair, the number of visiting businessmen was greater than Canton's city hotels could accommodate, and for a while some had to be put up in the suburbs. At one stage there were more than 5,000 visitors, who among them signed contracts in excess of $200 million. Trading with China is not merely a question of price haggling or supersalesmanship; one is inevitably drawn into a discussion on market conditions, on facts and figures which are disputed if there is doubt. There is an air of confidence in everything they say and do and this can at times be galling when it prevents us from getting what we are after.

They do nothing impulsively—it is all the result of a carefully thought-out and discussed plan. They work to priorities, with agriculture as the backbone and industry as the flesh and blood of their plan. They strive to achieve their targets in record time and are determined to be self-reliant, finding ingenious ways and means to overcome all obstacles. The greatest test came in 1959-1961 when they had three terrible years of harvest failures, with their differences with the Russians adding to their difficulties. Today there are no remaining signs of hardship. They are well fed, adequately clothed; housing increases each year throughout the length and breadth of the country, not only in cities. One cannot help being impressed by the confidence of the people, even though it is sometimes expressed in terminology that is strange to us.

According to *China Reconstructs* (January, 1965), China now deals with 125 countries and regions and has treaties with 38. Trade with Asian and African nations has increased more than threefold since 1950. Below are some statistics of China's foreign trade. They cannot be verified because China has not issued any figures since 1959. The quantities are probably higher, since the largest part of China's trade is with the Eastern bloc from whence exact figures are unobtainable.

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China's Foreign Trade
(in millions of U.S. dollars)

Year	*Imports*	*Exports*
1948	279	121
1949	136	109
1961	1,410	1,375
1962	1,082	1,364
1963	1,124	1,347
1964	1,090	1,132

Source of statistics: 1948: U.N. *Statistical Year Book.*
1949: *Direction of International Trade,* Series T, Vol. 2, No. 12, 1951.
1961-64: *Direction of International Trade,* 1960-1964.

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STARTING THE EIGHTEENTH YEAR

With this issue MONTHLY REVIEW begins its eighteenth year of publication. In the past we have published in every May issue the statement "Where We Stand" which appeared in Volume 1, Number 1, and we may well publish it from time to time in years ahead. This year, however, we have decided to commemorate the occasion in another way. When Leo Huberman was in Paris recently he was interviewed by the magazine *Partisans* on MR's views and achievements, and it seems appropriate that the interview be published in MR as well as in *Partisans*. In addition we are publishing a tribute to MR sent us by a young friend who for the time being is obliged to use a pen name. His generosity to the editors is exaggerated, as is customary on such occasions as anniversaries. But his assessment of what we have tried to do and the point of view from which we have tried to do it is accurate and informative.—*The Editors*

INTERVIEW WITH "PARTISANS"

By Leo Huberman

Could you relate the creation of MR to the situation of the American radical movement? What were the goals you defined? What part has MR played?

In the early years of the 20th century socialism was widely and eagerly discussed in the United States. In some cities and state legislatures, socialist candidates won elections and held office. In the 1912 election, Eugene V. Debs, the socialist candidate for President, polled close to 1,000,000 votes—the equivalent of approximately 3,000,000 votes in the election of 1948 when Henry Wallace, the Progressive Party candidate, polled only about 1,150,000 votes.

The popular interest in socialism was reflected in an enormous sale of socialist literature. *The Appeal to Reason*, a weekly, had a circulation of more than 300,000 for several years; pamphlets by Oscar Ameringer were printed in editions of hundreds of thousands; books by Bellamy, Upton Sinclair, and Jack London ranked with the best sellers of the day.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the situation had changed. In the lead editorial on page 1 of Vol. I of MONTHLY

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REVIEW, published in May 1949, the editors of the magazine, Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy, gave the following reason for the creation of MR:

> This widespread interest in socialism has declined to such an extent that today it would probably not be an exaggeration to say that for the great majority of Americans socialism is little more than a dirty word. This is an extraordinary situation because it occurs at the very moment that a large proportion of the rest of the world is moving toward socialism at an unprecedentedly rapid rate. It is a deeply disturbing situation because there are still many Americans who believe, with us, that in the long run, socialism will prove to be the only solution to the increasingly serious economic and social problems that face the United States.
>
> It is because we hold firmly to this belief that we are founding MONTHLY REVIEW, an independent magazine devoted to analyzing, from a socialist point of view, the most significant trends in domestic and foreign affairs.

Our original goal, then, was to restore the subject of socialism to the consciousness of the American people. We have held steadfast to that goal and it is not immodest to say that to a very small extent we have achieved it. Like all radical journals in the United States, MR has a tiny circulation—only 8500. Nevertheless it has won a high place for itself as evidenced by this comment from the Department of Economics of Wellesley College which said of MR a few years ago: "The leading Marxist intellectual (not Communist) economic journal published anywhere in the world, and it is on our subscription list at the College library for good reasons."

Where does MR stand as to official Marxism, the American Communist Party, and the unofficial Marxist groups?

Where we stand is reflected in our subtitle: "An Independent Socialist Magazine." We don't recognize that there is, or should be, an "official" Marxism. Ours is one kind of Marxism; the Communist Party, the Trotskyist Party, and other groups have theirs. On some positions and policies we are in agreement with the others; on many positions and policies we disagree. On occasion, we have run articles in our pages by Communists, Trotskyites, and the others, in which they criticize us and we answer them.

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We state clearly our own adherence to a revolutionary line and our own sympathy with the Chinese as pillars of the anti-imperialist struggle. Those Marxist groups, including the American Communist Party, which have a non-revolutionary line will naturally be critical of us—and we of them.

What are MR's present goals? Is its action related to the prospect of building up an American revolutionary organization?

MR is not a political party—it is a magazine. Its goals today, 17 years after its founding, remain what they were in 1949—to analyze and clarify events so its readers will understand that socialism is the only answer to the problems that beset the world. We hope, of course, that one day there will be built an American revolutionary organization and to the extent that our efforts make that possible, we will have accomplished our aim.

Meanwhile, we have expanded our program. In 1952, in the midst of the McCarthy period in the United States, we founded Monthly Review Press, a publishing house that dared to publish radical books which commercial publishers found "too hot to handle." The MR Press list has grown to over 75 titles, many of them distinguished books by distinguished authors in the fields of history, economics, politics, and world affairs. This year we are publishing our first novel, *The Road to Spain* by Ira Morris, concerning a man's evolution and a people's revolution in one of those South American countries where "the CIA always gives Cadillacs to the wrong men" and five percent of the population controls ninety-five percent of the wealth.

In Latin America, a Spanish edition of MR, *Monthly Review Selecciones en Castellano,* was launched in 1963. The baby is now as big as the parent—and far more effective.

The American New Left seems to have risen on the margin, if not in spite of, the traditional parties of the Left: can you recall the conditions in which the New Left developed, the ideological trends underlying it, and the organizational problems it is facing?

You are quite right—the New Left does not arise from the traditional parties of the Old Left, unlike the 1930's when

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the protest movement of young people stemmed from either the Communist or Socialist parties. The New Left has its roots, not in Marxist teaching, but in the idealism of serious young people in revolt against injustice, corruption, authority, moral decay, the hypocrisy and murderous foreign policy of the government. It was sparked by the Negro movement for integration when many young college people had their first experience on picket lines, against discrimination. Others joined the struggle in Mississippi and other cesspools of the South where they saw the most flagrant violation of the law by the so-called "guardians" of the law. In defense of their principles they have worked with the utmost dedication, often at the risk of their lives. They are heroes in the present struggle.

Theirs is more a moral than a political movement. Many are pacifists and, since they emphasize individual freedom rather than the collective good, they are not won over by arguments by the Old Left for the necessity for armed struggle, or the benefits to come from a social revolution with its attendant repression of the freedom of the individual. On the other hand, they have thus far opened their ranks to all who want to work with them without succumbing to pressure from some "elder statesmen" of the Left who warn them against association with Communists.

Their antipathy to the corruption, decadence, injustice, and savageries of the American Establishment is laudable, but in their concern for the rights of the individual, they revolt against organization *per se* and this is obviously a handicap in a movement to effect major social change.

Do you think that the economic problems raised by integration may be solved within the framework of a reformist policy, without challenging the nature of the American society?

No, the economic and social problems that face the United States cannot be solved within the framework of a reformist policy. American society is so corrupt, so brutal, so purposeless, so violent, its city, state, and national governments so honeycombed with graft and special interests, and its foreign policy so imperialist (of necessity, because much of its "affluence" arises

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from exploitation of other countries) that only a revolutionary change can begin to solve the problems.

In this richest of all countries, some 66 million Americans, 1/3 of the population, still live in poverty or deprivation (of course, the Negroes are the most poor, the most deprived). The *New York Times,* in an editorial on April 20, 1965, cited New York City Welfare Department figures showing that the number of children growing up on the public relief rolls was rising. "The cycle of inherited want in this city is becoming a disastrous upward spiral," said the *Times.* "300,000 New York children are living on public assistance in this most prosperous year in American history."

The unemployment rate has been going down of late but the number of unemployed people is still equal to, or greater than, the individual population of 2/3 of the 50 states. (Negro unemployment is about double the white level.)

I have no space for further proof that, for millions of Americans, American society is not so "affluent" as Europeans have been led to believe.

So much for the economic problems. What of education? At his news conference on April 2, 1965, President Johnson said: "Last year almost one out of every three of all draftees were rejected by the armed services because they could not read or write at the eighth grade level. . . . Today as I speak, nearly 54 million have not finished high school."

In Johnson's "Great Society," many city governments can no longer maintain law and order. Crime and violence are so widespread that parks and streets are unsafe at night; in New York City there were so many thefts and muggings and killings on the subways that special policemen have had to be assigned to every subway train after 4 P.M.

So corrupt and violent and unjust a society breeds the kind of people who can look out of their windows, see a neighbor being murdered, and not notify the police. Or shout to a deranged person about to jump from a high building: "Come on, jump! Are you chicken? I can't wait around all day!"

These are true—not uncommon—happenings in the United States. This is a barbarous society which at this very moment is perpetuating in Vietnam a crime as monstrous as the crimes

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of Hitler. This is a society in decay, a society which cannot be mended by reformist policies. Its very nature must be changed.

Do you think that the Negro problems can find a political expression within a separate organization (such as the Black Muslims, for instance), or on the contrary, do you feel that an organization should include the more specific problems of Negro exploitation in a wider struggle?

In the short run, both types of organization will probably arise at different stages in the struggle. In the long run, it seems to me that an all-inclusive organization will be found to be the best-suited to the task. It is already apparent that the problems the Negro faces, while in every way much more accentuated (e.g., unemployment, housing, education, participation in government), are the problems that are also of concern to underprivileged whites. The solution to the problem is a change in the system—and to accomplish that end, unity of the dispossessed of all races is absolutely essential.

Latin America, war in Vietnam . . . what are their economic and political repercussions; do these struggles modify the conditions of the struggle within *the United States?*

If, as appears likely, the war in Vietnam gets bigger and bigger, and American military forces are sent to put down Latin American revolts, then the economic effect must be to cut deeply into real wages and to precipitate an unprecedented balance-of-payments crisis.

When this happens—and already the problem of paying for the Vietnam war begins to be troublesome—and the casualties continue to mount, there may indeed be political repercussions as well. The protest movement is already mounting and it will continue to grow. Eventually, to the ranks of the students and intellectuals and radicalized petty bourgeoisie who today make up the main body of the opposition will be added, in increasing numbers, the working class. It seems far-fetched to suppose that the labor movement which is pro-war today will again be a force for progress in the United States but given the circumstances outlined above, it can happen.

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What does MR think of the part played by Cuba in America? Do you feel that it has receded after the Tricontinental Conference, compared to what it used to be?

We have always regarded the Cuban Revolution as one of the most important events of our era. For the peoples of Latin America the lesson of Cuba's successful defiance of United States imperialism, only 90 miles from its shores, cannot be overestimated. But there are dark clouds on the horizon.

It is too early to measure the influence of the Tricontinental Conference, but it is beginning to be apparent that Cuba has now aligned itself with the Soviet Union in its conflict with China. If that continues to be the case, if Fidel Castro continues to take a strong position against the Chinese, characterized by unseemly invective and outrageous name-calling, then his influence with the radical Left will decline, not only in the United States, but also in Latin America.

What do you think of the struggle in Guatemala?

From what we have learned about the struggle, we are in complete agreement with the political line taken by the Yon Sosa guerrilla movement.

You spent some time in Europe; what was your impression after the political contacts you may have had?

I did not interview enough of the leadership of the various Left groups to form a considered judgment. But on the basis of my talks with the few leaders I did contact, I must say that I did not see enough concern with and struggle against the most monstrous act of this present period—the imperialist war on Vietnam.

What do you think of Partisans?

We have a high regard for *Partisans,* both in its form and in its content. Sometimes we are even a bit jealous of it because it contains articles which we would like to have thought of ourselves! In general it seems to us that the approach of *Partisans* is similar to that of MR—so we like it very much.

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AN ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE

By Peter Lathrop

It would be appropriate to recount and to celebrate the many achievements of MR on its seventeenth anniversary. But mere description is quite uncharacteristic of a publication whose central purpose has been to *explain* contemporary history. And MR's main achievement requires some explanation, for no other publication originating in the US (or anywhere else, as far as I know) has so attracted socialists in every part of a world fragmented by disagreements over revolutionary strategy and tactics. True, the friends of MR are united by a faith in socialism, but a common ethical purpose cannot in itself weld together a world audience divided over means. Nor have the editors attempted to conceal or ameliorate real differences among socialists with traditional journalistic gimmicks such as pleasing everybody by saying nothing or by presenting every shade of left-wing opinion indiscriminately.

Rather, the chief binding force is necessity—the necessity of socialists everywhere to develop the kind of clear analyses of the most significant trends of the historical present which MR seeks to offer. I think the magazine's success results primarily from three closely interrelated factors: (1) the editors, (2) the Marxian methodology and editorial policy, and (3) the "favorable" historical and geographical conditions under which the enterprise has matured.

(1) Monopoly capitalism generates more or less interchangeable mass circulation publications which attractively package and disseminate ruling class ideology. There is, of course, a certain flexibility within the cultural apparatus, which needs numerous publications to create a specious variety, to encourage intellectual mediocrity, and to display a steady conformity to current ideological styles. In this context editorships become institutionalized: the high salaried positions are effortlessly filled, and editors are frequently interchangeable.

MR, on the other hand, is a highly dispensable, unstable in-

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stitution, persecuted in periods of political repression and merely tolerated in a climate of affluence and consensus. It is chiefly the creature of its founders and editors, Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy. Their human qualities have largely determined the nature and quality, as well as the survival and growth of MR. They have brought brilliance and energy no less than generosity and modesty to MR, the main focus of their dedication to the socialist cause during the past two decades. Those who know them personally need not be reminded of their examples as men. And the evidence embodied in their work is fully as conclusive. The unsigned, jointly written "Review of the Month" (the magazine's unifying feature) provides monthly testimony to the editors' analytic power and personal modesty. Furthermore, without generosity and energy, MR would not have so many friends and contributors among revolutionaries at the barricades and intellectuals working on other fronts. Quite obviously, many who publish under the MR colophon could find larger, more profitable, and safer markets. And the beginning writer soon discovers the editors to be patient, rigorous critics who demand and encourage his best work.

(2) In the absence of a coherent methodology, individual intelligence and energy can, at most, yield brilliant insights which are, unfortunately, also isolated perceptions, brightly colored stones that lack a pattern and a setting. But socialists seeking to change the world must understand the essential aspects of social reality. Since the activity of every revolutionary movement is intimately related to the central historical forces of socialism and imperialism, effective revolutionary action anywhere depends ultimately upon rational and comprehensive theories of the ways in which the chief socialist and imperialist powers tend to act and react to each other and to the thrusts of national revolutionary groups. We require global theories, not random insights. To achieve the highest rationality, contemporary analyses of the means to the socialist end must come from Marxists who possess the "world consciousness," and the ability to understand national parts in terms of international wholes.

Given the enormous complexity of economic, social, political, and ideological crosscurrents, such a comprehensive under-

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standing is impossible unless one rigorously selects and creates categories of analysis. MR has consistently adhered to the central principle of Marxist methodology: that to understand and participate in social decay and growth, one must cut deeply into the overpowering underbrush of observable phenomena to formulate and answer fundamental economic questions. Early in the century, Lenin examined international cartels because they

> show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed, and they *reveal the object* of the struggle between the various capitalist groups. This last circumstance is the most important; it alone shows us the historic-economic significance of events; for the *forms* of the struggle may and do vary in accordance with varying, relatively particular and transitory causes, but the *essence* of the struggle, its class *content, cannot* change while classes exist.*

To fail to arrive at this point means accepting a view of history as an irrational, and therefore, uncontrollable process. To stop here insures an historical caricature. MR has sought to lay bare the relationships between the economic essence and its social, political, and ideological manifestations. For if the economic base determines the historical limits of present thought and action, the political and ideological realms constitute the crucial areas within which men of the present shape history. Lenin summarizes the importance of methodology succinctly: "I trust that this pamphlet [*Imperialism*] will help the reader to understand the fundamental economic question, *viz,* the question of the economic essence of imperialism, for unless this is studied it will be impossible to appraise modern war and modern politics."**

MR might be considered a continuous forum for defining and appraising "modern war and politics" in terms of the "economic essence of imperialism." In articles, editorials, and books, MR has sponsored *exposés*—in the meaningful sense of that overexploited word—of American capitalism and imperialism as the primary force inhibiting progress toward the goal of socialism and a decent life in every part of the non-socialist world. MR has gradually evolved a model of the structure of monopoly capitalism which illuminates the domestic and foreign

* V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism,* in *Selected Works.* Vol. V, pp. 67-68.
** *Ibid.,* p. 6.

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consequences of the chief problem confronting corporate capitalism—its chronic inability to dispose of surplus capital profitably and rationally.*

The multiple effects of methods employed to resolve this contradiction within the confines of capitalist institutions and mentality have been carefully traced in the pages of MR. In the United States such methods have secured a relative economic stability anchored by massive military expenditures. In the process of militarization, the entire American society has been enveloped by the most lethal ideological smog in history—one which justifies and even glorifies dehumanization and deprivation in every sphere of social and private life. And the domestic blessings of monopoly capitalism are regularly exported to an unwilling world, often in the deceptive form of butter, but increasingly in the undisguised form of guns. Financed by the Great Society, the American military machine functions as an international instrument to preserve vital outlets for capital investment. But by threatening those who would withdraw from the protective shield of neo-colonialism, the American ruling class has hastened what it so desperately seeks to avoid—the movement toward world socialism. The final solution to the colonial question has become an American blueprint for self-liquidation. And if the implications of this strategy are just now beginning to haunt some of its original formulators such as Senator Fulbright, the outlines were accurately sketched in MR more than a decade ago.

A clear perception of American capitalism as a world force depends not only on an understanding of the internal characteristics of the system, but upon the nature and potentialities of socialism in its various stages of development. *For it is the interaction between socialist forces and the internally dictated requirements of an expansive and irrational monopoly capitalism which constitutes the central dialectic of world history in this epoch.* By defining the chief characteristics of a socialist society as "first, public ownership of the decisive sectors of the economy, and second, comprehensive planning of production for the benefit of the producers themselves" (Vol. I, No. 1), the editors have

* For the most comprehensive statement of this model, see *Monopoly Capital* by Paul Baran and Paul M. Sweezy (Monthly Review Press, 1966).

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been in a position to analyze socialism as a complex economic and social reality in various stages of infancy and childhood. This editorial policy is of crucial importance, for theorists who construct ethical definitions of socialism usually conclude that since no existing society claiming to be socialist has fully realized particular ethical possibilities, socialism is merely a utopian dream, a "god that failed." However ingeniously defended, such subjective idealism obscures the fundamental historical movement of our time; it clouds analysis and weakens revolutionary action.

Socialism is a reality with ethical *possibilities,* not a pipedream hopelessly confined to the imagination. Consequently, MR has concerned itself with the achievements of the various socialist nations and with the growing collective strength of the socialist world. Of course, major mistakes in resolving problems of economic and social organization and growth, political freedom, and the creation of socialist temperament in various socialist countries have not been ignored. But MR has not specialized in condemnations of the shortcomings of the socialist world. Constructive criticisms have been tailored to the material possibilities in each country. Furthermore, the editors and contributors have not attempted to impose solutions, but rather to discuss alternatives.

The dynamic analyses of the socialist and capitalist worlds place basic problems of revolution in clear perspective. Taken together, the essays and books on the underdeveloped countries which MR has published during the past 17 years constitute a most significant contribution to the understanding of revolutionary potentialities in vast areas of Latin America, Asia, and Africa. It is impossible to mention more than a few titles here. MR published Paul Baran's monumental *Political Economy of Growth* (1957) which is still the primary text for students and revolutionaries attempting to create a decent society in countries impoverished and retarded by foreign interests. The works of Baran, Sweezy, Huberman, and Adolfo Gilly are among the best studies of the Cuban revolution in any language. Gordon Lewis's *Puerto Rico: Freedom and Power in the Caribbean* (1963) has received international acclaim as the most profound single work on the sad history of that colony. The list could be

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extended, but the point is sufficiently clear. MR's publications are not only relevant to the historical present: they also reach the battlefield.

(3) MR's consistently intelligent Marxist analyses of world socialism cannot be fully explained in terms of the personal qualities of its founders and their Marxian methodology and editorial policy. *For the unique characteristic of MR has been its balanced, global perspective.* Huberman and Sweezy have examined the major events in the socialist and capitalist worlds in order to discover the problems and potentialities of international socialism. Unaffected by nationalistic bias or organizational allegiance, they have anticipated and recorded revolutionary energy wherever it has erupted in the postwar world.

Of course, no group can escape the imprint of history and geography: and it would be foolish to except MR. Quite the contrary, I think MR's global outlook results largely from its national origins. Throughout the magazine's brief history, the immediate prospects for American socialism have, to put it mildly, been dim. This temporary political vacuum creates several basic alternatives for the American Marxist: he can withdraw to an ivory tower; he can flirt with the left wing of the ruling establishment; he can devote his energies to sectarian politics; or he can explore his socialist commitment in a larger geographical arena. Exchanging a national for an international scope, and not regarding themselves as members of a condemned national minority, Huberman and Sweezy have defined the problems of socialism as part of an ascendant historical force.

This shift in geographical focus tends to break up old modes of consciousness: the world no longer appears as a major American and Western European center with uncivilized suburbs in the vague outlying areas. Western values no longer function as world norms. In short, one begins to develop a world consciousness. Objective events have fully justified this transition which MR began nearly two decades ago. Of course, for bourgeois intellectuals, the underdeveloped world remains a suburb, but it is now a threatening one. Their focus has not shifted; nor has their consciousness altered; and, hence, their perspective on world revolution becomes increasingly distorted. What appears

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to socialists as a set of possibilities strikes most American intellectuals as merely a set of unfortunate paradoxes.

In addition to encouraging a global viewpoint, MR's American setting has also helped its editors, contributors, and readers maintain a critical independence. In the long run, this circumstance has contributed significantly to the quality and flexibility of MR's analyses. During the first years of the Sino-Soviet split, for example, it was virtually impossible to find a balanced account of the complex issues in any media—right, center, or left. In the midst of emotional tirades there were, of course, reasoned discussions; but they were, quite naturally, conducted within the framework of Soviet or Chinese assumptions. On the other hand, since MR had no specific national or political ties, it was free to examine the issues in the light of its central commitment to the best interests of world socialism. In May, 1963, Huberman and Sweezy published a brilliant (and widely influential) account of the conflict in which they accurately predicted the depth of the split. The same American conditions which enabled their lucid analysis also encouraged revision of hypotheses when new evidence appeared. The introduction to "The Split in the Socialist World" is characteristic of MR's tone:

> The Review of the Month in the December, 1961, issue of MR was on the subject of the Sino-Soviet dispute. Since then a lot has happened, and a large amount of new or previously relatively inaccessible material has been published. In the light of these developments, we have to say quite frankly that our earlier analysis of the dispute does not stand up. It contains serious inaccuracies, the emphases are misplaced, and it now seems to us that the conclusions are untenable. But much more serious, the whole argument rested on a misconception of what the dispute is all about.*

Let us hope that MR will continue to provide clear, creative Marxist analyses of the historical present—studies which will be useful to socialists everywhere, to everyone committed to "a united front against imperialism, the real enemy of mankind."**

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* MONTHLY REVIEW, May 1963, p. 1.
** *Ibid.*, p. 20

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

A Look at Western Europe

When I first visited Western Europe, around 1910, I felt that I was in the middle of things. London, Paris, and Berlin were immense, solidly built capitals of thriving nations and planet-wide empires. The British Empire topped the show. Scattered over a quarter of the earth, with half a billion inhabitants, its 132 possessions spanned all five continents. British merchant fleets sailed the seas. The British Navy dominated the oceans. British businessmen were everywhere, the pound sterling was the medium of world exchange, and English was replacing French as the language of trade and diplomacy. The French Empire was almost equally widespread. Russia, Germany, and Austro-Hungary ranged only a little behind, with Holland, Italy, Belgium, and Spain in the background. Europe was the center of Western civilization. It felt strong and looked massive and permanent.

Four years later, in 1914, the rattle of small arms and the crash of artillery upset the European power balance. Meadows were turned into battlefields. Unhappy civilians were driven from their homes. Young men died by the millions. In another twenty years, by 1939, war had been mechanized. Battle fronts disappeared, destruction and death rained from the skies. Great cities of Europe and Asia lay in ruins, and great nations were bankrupted and prostrated by the war or swept by revolution.

This second period of war damage to life and capital equipment was accompanied by political damage far more consequential. The social revolution in Tsarist Russia had begun in 1917. It was followed, after 1945, by an Eastern European turnover from capitalism to socialism. At the same time peoples who lived in the European empires in Asia and Africa launched successful wars of independence which crumpled the structure of European imperialism-colonialism. War, social revolution, and colonial revolt had downgraded Central and Western

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Europe from first-rate to second- and third-rate world powers.

The misfortunes of war led to a widespread shift in world power relations. By 1945 every one of the top European powers had been downgraded. In their places were three "new" powers —the United States, the Soviet Union, and People's China. Two of the three were outside of Europe. In 1910 all of the world powers were capitalist; today two of the three top world powers are building socialism.

After having watched and studied this world power-transformation with the closest attention, I spent five months in Western and Central Europe during the winter of 1965-1966 and had a welcome opportunity to compare present-day Western Europe with that of 1914 and 1936.

Europe Is Prosperous on the Surface

European nuclei of the former world empires are prosperous to a surprising degree: they have cleared up most of the physical war damage; rebuilt their gold reserves and stabilized their currencies; installed many of the latest appliances and gadgets (see MR, March 1966, p. 55); improved systems of education and social security; reduced unemployment, torn down slums, and built hundreds of thousands of modern housing units.

The changes in gold reserves provide an interesting example of European reconstruction:

Gold Reserves in Billions of Dollars

	World	U.S.A.	Britain	France	W. Ger.	Italy
1958	$39.4	20.6	2.8	0.7	2.6	1.1
1960	40.5	17.8	2.8	1.6	2.9	1.5
1962	41.4	16.1	2.6	2.6	3.7	1.6
1964-65	43.0	13.9	2.2	4.5	4.4	1.8

(Federal Reserve Board figures)

Two of the four European nations have improved their gold position notably; one has advanced slowly; the fourth has lost slightly. The most stable currencies in 1966 are the Swiss franc, the West German mark, and the Dutch guilder. The French franc is a close fourth.

Europe Is Divided

I was tempted to use as a title for this section "Europe

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Lacks Unity," but that phrase is not strong enough to picture the reality. Europe is sharply divided.

First, Europe is divided by the Cold War—West versus East. This division is sharp, but not the sharpest.

Europe is divided into nations. Nationalism persists everywhere. It is softened in parts of the West by a decreased stress on visas and frontier examination of baggage. It persists in the insistence on passports and the maintenance of trade restrictions. It is emphasized in language differences and in monetary units.

One important European nation, Germany, was divided in 1945 as a result of the Potsdam Agreements. For political reasons this division has been maintained and emphasized through two decades.

Numerous attempts have been made to bridge national barriers. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an alliance made up chiefly of remnants of the pre-war European empires, plus some of their lesser neighbors. It is essentially military.

The Common Market, embracing five or six countries, aims to lower or abolish tariff barriers and create a unified European area in which trade is unhampered by political restrictions.

Other attempts at Western European unity have aimed at a federation, a United States of Europe, or some other political apparatus that would include a considerable number of European nations. None of these efforts has come anywhere near success.

One of the most insistent divisive forces in Europe is the persistence of huge military establishments, armed, equipped, and trained to destroy life and property on the "enemy" side of every frontier.

Political ambitions play a divisive role in Europe. The latest example is French policy under General de Gaulle. Exclusion of Britain from the Common Market; sabotaging the Market; sabotaging NATO; continued economic and political attacks on United States policy; threats to withdraw from NATO in 1969—all this adds up to a determination to restore French leadership and downgrade U.S. leadership in European affairs.

By all odds the most persistent and dangerous source of European division is the competitive struggle of rival business

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groups to capture and hold sources of raw materials and markets. Rivalry in autos and shipbuilding, chemicals and capital exports is particularly intense.

As Europe, with an increasing population, becomes more industrialized and more urbanized, demand for imported raw materials and foodstuffs grows. In order to pay for imports, nations must export and sell competitively in the world market. It was this growth of productivity in excess of market capacity which pushed Europe toward the military confrontations of 1914 and 1939. It is equally potent today.

Europe's Number One Problem

Any observer of current European affairs is forced to an inescapable conclusion: the number one problem of Europe is the United States. Europe has other problems, some of which I have listed. Any of them or all of them together seem minor in comparison with the shadow which the U.S. economy and United States political maneuvers are casting over Europe.

First and most insidious among United States threats to Europe's stability and security is economic penetration. United States funds are being invested in European enterprises. Foreign investment is not new. For centuries European concerns made overseas investments in North America and elsewhere. But in 1966 the disproportion between the wealth and income of the United States and of European states is so great that one year of United States corporate profits would buy up the total industrial plant of some entire European countries.

United States bankers are not only investing large sums and thus becoming titular owners of European enterprises, but United States corporations, like General Motors and Standard Oil, are building plants in European countries, taking advantage of cheap labor and low transportation costs, and grabbing off European markets. Europeans are well aware that during recent years the Canadian economy has been absorbed into the economy of the United States, making Canada a semi-colonial victim of its rich and powerful neighbor. What is to prevent Western Europe from being similarly absorbed?

United States military forces occupy strategic positions all over Western Europe. The latest published estimate that I have

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seen (*Christian Science Monitor*, March 11, 1966) places the number of United States military personnel on the European continent at 321,000. Of these 250,000 are in Germany; 30,000 in France; 20,000 in Britain; 10,000 in Italy; 8,000 in Spain. In addition to ground forces, the United States Strategic Air Command plays a key role in the air; the United States Sixth Fleet patrols the Mediterranean; while the Atlantic Fleet controls the Atlantic. European land, sea, and air are occupied by more than a third of a million Americans in uniform, with their military equipment.

NATO military forces are under a unified command in which Washington plays a leading role. At the December 1965 meeting of NATO ministers, Secretary McNamara warned his fellow delegates of "the Chinese Menace." Secretary Rusk emphasized the importance to the West of winning the present war in Vietnam and urged those present to provide technical and personnel help for the United States anti-communist drive in Asia. Washington, which is penetrating Europe economically and militarily, also wishes to shape European political decisions.

United States interests are omnipresent in Europe. Through economic, military and political installations they are doing everything in their power to keep Central and Western Europe in line with and subject to Washington.

Problem Number Two

Western Europe's second problem is a re-industrialized, re-armed West Germany. The Potsdam Agreements partitioned Germany, twice defeated in major wars (1914 and 1939), and condemned West Germany to be disarmed and so de-industrialized that it would be technically incapable of taking a major part in another general war.

United States strategy in Europe, running counter to the Potsdam decisions, has demanded a strong European nation from which, if necessary, large scale military operations could be directed against the Soviet Union. Before his death, President Roosevelt agreed with Prime Minister Churchill that the United States and Great Britain should jointly police the planet. By 1947 Britain had to relinquish even the defense of the Mediterranean. France was second choice for a United States

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anti-communist partner, but France proved weak, with one ineffective coalition government replacing another. After the advent of de Gaulle in 1958, French economic and political life reached a level of relative stability; but the de Gaulle regime, far from acting as a catspaw of Washington policy, sponsored a vigorous drive for independence from the United States and its feeble British ally.

One choice and only one remained to Washington if its anti-communist policy in Europe was to be implemented: a close alliance with anti-communist West Germany and with its General Staff, top-officered by the same men who had headed Hitler's campaigns in Europe and Africa.

Washington's imperative needs in Western Europe have resulted in building up this "most loyal and dependable" European ally. West German heavy industry and military potential have been rapidly restored. Today West Germany is second among the planet's trading nations, third among producers of industrial equipment, with the second strongest military apparatus in Europe and a firm determination to restore the unity and power of the prewar German Fatherland.

Space will not permit me to comment on the break-up of the British Commonwealth, heir to the contradictions and complications of the British Empire. Nor can I write about the political weakness of Italy or the critical issues facing Franco's fascist government in Spain. Let me sum up by stating that Europe bristles with unsolved economic and political problems.

Europe Drifts toward War

Twenty years after war's end in 1945, Europe has achieved a large degree of comfort and, in places, of affluence. The price of this surface prosperity has been an increase of economic dependence, a partial loss of political independence, a sense of impotence, and a widespread feeling of insecurity.

A divided Europe is drifting toward hot war, a third outbreak—armed this time with nuclear weapons. The competitive economic struggle is in full cry. The major European countries are equipped to annihilate their adversaries. Once alliances have been clarified and the lines of conflict worked out, Western and Central Europe will again be turned into a hideous battlefield.

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Correspondence

From time to time we receive letters from readers which contain information of general interest. Sometimes we ask the author to expand the letter into an article; sometimes we condense the gist into a paragraph in the Notes from the Editors on the inside covers. But there are some that do not lend themselves to either procedure, and we propose from now on to publish a selection of these from time to time under the above heading.—*The Editors*

The British Army and Rhodesia

We have been wondering, as we suspect many have, why the United Kingdom has so often seen fit to use military force and violence against its past and present colonies but *not* against the white settler regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia. Why would the British government send troops to overthrow the colored and constitutionally elected Dr. Cheddi Jagan in British Guiana but *not* overthrow the white racist Smith? Why would the British government purposefully alter the electoral system in British Guiana to prevent the re-election of Dr. Jagan but *not* interfere with the electoral machinery in Southern Rhodesia to prevent the election of the white supremacist and secessionist Ian Smith? Could the crucial difference be the color factor?

We suggest that one of the reasons Prime Minister Wilson said he would not use military force against the rebel Rhodesian regime is that he knows very well that he cannot count on the loyalty of his officers and troops in such an action. We are reporting this as American citizens employed by the British Military Government in West Berlin where we have had the opportunity of talking with British military personnel.

It was revealing to hear one, Colonel Peb Badger of the Brixmis Unit (British Commanders-in-Chief Mission to the Soviet Forces in Germany) with which we work, tell one of us on January 21, 1966, that there is a widespread commitment amongst his fellow officers that if they were ordered into combat against the Rhodesians many would resign their commissions as officers. Colonel Badger, who is transferring to England

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this month to command the Yorkshire Brigade, went on to say, "Now we all know the natives aren't ready to rule themselves, but we can't just say that openly." This statement indicates a tacit approval of the rationale behind white Anglo-Saxon rule in Rhodesia amongst British officers.

Even enlisted men have expressed "extreme reluctance" at the prospect of firing on white Rhodesians, whom they regard as their "own flesh and blood"—which indeed most of them are. Many officers and enlisted men have a great personal respect for the Rhodesian soldier with whom they fought side-by-side in the Second World War and more recently against the guerrillas in Malaya. Many feel that Britain, as well as they themselves personally, owe the Rhodesians a deep debt of gratitude for the help they received in the Second World War and in Malaya, and that to turn against them at this point with arms would be a gross breach of military honor. Furthermore, many have close friends and relations in white Rhodesia, and many officers express fraternal bonds with the great numbers of retired British officers who have gone to Southern Rhodesia to pioneer and settle.

One, Sergeant E. Clark, also of the Brixmis Unit, put it this way: "If I were in a position where, having a rifle, I had to stop a fight between a white Rhodesian and a black native, I'd shoot the black fellow right off." The sergeant went on to confide that if they were ordered to go in, and if they did go in, they'd be mighty sure that their rifles weren't pointed at any whites; and, he said, the white Rhodesians know as much.

This racial loyalty or horde instinct may not be surprising, but it takes on a particularly nasty face when we hear the same people tell us, quite openly and coldly in the same breath, how they flattened and scourged entire villages in Cyprus and Aden, literally murdering hundreds "on a night's job," in order to "teach the natives a lesson or two."

The United Kingdom today continues to practice reactionary and colonialist policies—in spite of its "socialist" government—which, like all such policies, contain an admixture of racism. This observation may be confirmed by examining the situations in Cyprus, Aden, Borneo, Malaya, and British Guiana.

We submit that color is a crucial factor preventing the

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British government from crushing the Smith clique which has committed the crime of high treason against the Crown. Whether the shrewd and unprincipled Mr. Wilson is an accomplice to this racialism or is merely cognizant of the limitations imposed on him by an unreliable military apparatus and doing his utmost within the given circumstances, is a question which we cannot answer at this time, but which must be answered if and when the economic sanctions fail to bring Mr. Smith to his knees.

Dale and Elena Vree
Berlin, February 1966

Explosive Okinawa

I have just concluded a week's visit to Okinawa. Perhaps you would be interested in this short report regarding one of the major United States military base complexes in Southeast Asia.

I found MR and its editors well known, and was very pleased to be introduced by a friend as having written an article for "the famous American magazine MONTHLY REVIEW." My article, which you published in December 1963 ("The Shame of Okinawa"), has, I was told, been helpful in political work in Okinawa. And I believe that the people of this American annexation in the Pacific are developing toward a capacity to help others in the struggle for true democracy and dignity.

My major impression was of the contradiction between the awesome United States military strength represented by the bases on one hand, and the strength of the people, and their growing consciousness of it, on the other. I visited a newly built pier, part of a project to develop a new harbor for Vietnam trans-shipment via the Kadena airbase. I spoke to farmers opposing land requisition here, some of whom say they will sit in front of the bulldozers when they come and choose death rather than loss of their land. Their village is surrounded by a large oil tank farm (all of the tanks built on what was formerly villagers' land), and on the way from the fields to the cluster of houses I passed a ventilation shaft above which a warning was posted: NO SMOKING WITHIN FIFTY FEET! I think it probably needs very little imagination to see that the situation is explosive.

James M. Diamond
Japan, March 1966

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(continued from inside front cover)

Readers' suggestions for titles to be included in the "Socialist Classics" series will be welcome. When making suggestions, please include, if you can, information about copyright date(s), the most recent edition printed, and whether you can furnish a clean copy for reproduction purposes.

Choice, the influential publication of the Association of College and Research Libraries, has included three MR Press books on its list of "Outstanding Academic Books" which will appear in its May issue. They are Dolci's *A New World in the Making,* Gilly's *Inside the Cuban Revolution,* and Nkrumah's *Consciencism.* Next time you are persuading your local librarian to buy MR Press books (which naturally we hope all readers make a regular practice of doing) don't forget to call his or her attention to the *Choice* listings.

The Latin American Revolution has suffered two grievous losses in recent months. During the winter the defrocked revolutionary Colombian priest Camilo Torres, who had joined the guerrillas in the mountains, was killed in a skirmish with the armed forces. Torres was a natural leader of great talent and magnetism. And early in March the Guatemalan government forces caught and killed Francisco Amado, the leading theorist of the Guatemalan MR-13 guerrilla movement.

Owing to a typographical error, an article listed in the advertisement for *Canadian Dimension* (April, p. 64) was titled "The New Military in Canadian Labour." This should of course have been "The New Militancy in Canadian Labour." Our apologies to the editors of CD.

With this issue, MR begins its eighteenth year of publication. Anniversary material will be found beginning on page 37.

Two new MR pamphlets are now available: Leo Huberman's *Freedom under Capitalism and Socialism,* the 1965 Fritz Pappenheim Memorial Lecture which was first published in last October's MR (single copies 25¢, 5 for $1, 30 for $5); and Paul A. Baran's *The Commitment of the Intellectual* reprinted from MR, May 1961 (same prices). These are good propaganda/education materials; we urge you to make full use of them.

John Rader of 8659 Magnolia Avenue, Riverside, California, writes: "Will readers and subscribers living in this area please inform me of their presence? Maybe we can organize our efforts in behalf of the most earthy yet sophisticated socialist periodical in contemporary U.S.A." Good idea.

Readers may be interested in the following announcement from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation:

"The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation is planning the publication of two series of monographs: *Studies in the Cold War,* edited by David Horowitz and *Studies in Imperialism,* edited by Perry Anderson and Hamza Alavi. Individual monographs in the series will be collected and published periodically in several languages. It is the aim of the Foundation to encourage new research and also to collect and centralize existing studies, and therefore scholars are invited to submit either new or already published work in these vital areas, for inclusion in the Foundation volumes. Authors of new work will receive remuneration.

"Send all material to *Studies in the Cold War,* or *Studies in Imperialism,* Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 3 and 4 Sharers Place, Haymarket, London, S.W.1."

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